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SWEDEN:

**'Hell of a Nice Guy'**

Fluent in Russian and with vast experience in the Soviet Union as Sweden's assistant air attaché (1941-42) and chief air attaché (1949-52), Col. Stig Erik Constant Wennerström was an invaluable source of information on Soviet weapons and plans. In Washington, where he was later transferred, United States Air Force intelligence officers frequently sought his judgment on intelligence items of their own. Since the affable, strapping 6-footer provided a fund of knowledge, he was granted the status of "friendly" attaché, and given the same treatment as officers from NATO countries. He attended SAC and other strategic briefings and visited all installations opened to Allied officers.

On the Washington cocktail circuit Wennerström was regarded as a "hell of a nice guy," and along with his attractive blond wife, a prominent Swedish socialite, the couple became the darlings of the Air Force set. No one gave further thought to the fact that the colonel was a wizard with a miniature camera. And before leaving the U.S. in 1957, after five years' duty, Wennerström received the Legion of Merit for "exceptional services to the United States."

Colonel Wennerström's services proved exceptional—only not to the U.S. In a television address to his nation last

CPYRGHT



Wennerström: Shutterbug spy

week, Sweden's Premier Tage Erlander spoke of the "most distasteful case" ever to hit his country. The case, which topped Britain's Profumo scandal in its security implications, involved that "nice guy," Wennerström. The colonel had confessed that he had spied for the Soviet Union "for money"—a reported \$10,000 a year, for the past fifteen years. Now he was under arrest and charged with "gross espionage."

**Hush-Hush:** Suspicion was aroused two years ago when Sweden's Defense Ministry found Wennerström's fingerprints on a secret document. After the discovery Wennerström's plush ten-room villa near Stockholm was put under surveillance, his phone tapped, and a recording device installed in his bar. The investigation was so hush-hush that even the Premier was not informed.

Besides information gleaned while in Washington concerning U.S. and NATO military secrets, Wennerström as a close adviser to Sweden's Defense Minister Sven Andersson had access to Swedish defense and mobilization plans. And as a camera bug, the 56-year-old blue-eyed colonel utilized his skill to photograph secret documents which he then turned over in small containers to Soviet officials while shaking their hands at embassy parties.

The handsome colonel was finally trapped when Swedish security men planted fake classified military documents where Wennerström was bound to see them. Secretly, they watched him photograph the papers and deliver them to Russian diplomats at receptions or near the Soviet Embassy.

Shortly after Wennerström's arrest,

Stockholm demanded the ouster of two Russian diplomats for activities "contrary to both Swedish and international law." As the government appointed a three-judge board to investigate Sweden's security system, newspapers called for the cancellation of Premier Khrushchev's visit scheduled for next spring. In Parliament, Liberal Party opposition leader Bertil Ohlin demanded an investigation to fix "the political responsibility" for the long interval between the time the colonel was first suspected and his arrest.

As for the colonel himself, his trial is expected to be held behind closed doors later this summer. Under the law, he faces life imprisonment, which in Sweden means a maximum of only ten years, reducible to seven or eight years for "good behavior."